



23rd January 2026

Dear Parents & Carers,

Despite the rather wet weather we have experienced over the last couple of weeks, the beautiful apple tree planted in memory of Zach Barnes has certainly been getting all the water it needs. Even with the rain, our children have continued to spend time outdoors, learning, exploring and enjoying their environment with big smiles on their faces. Their resilience and enthusiasm continue to shine through, whatever the weather.

Our reception children have also been busy taking part in the Big Garden Birdwatch. As part of this, they ventured into the forest, listening carefully for birdsong and practising how to move slowly and quietly. Using a checklist of birds commonly found in the UK, the children followed a trail where pictures of birds had been hidden on stones around the forest. Along the way, a magpie, pigeon and seagull were spotted, and the children were particularly delighted to hear the song of a robin and spot him hiding in the bushes. Last week, parakeets were also seen, adding to an already memorable outdoor learning experience.

We are delighted to share our newly published school prospectus, which truly captures the spirit of our wonderful school. It reflects our nurturing environment, strong academic focus and our core values of communication, inclusion, resilience and responsibility, which underpin everything we do. A special thank you goes to Mrs Heathcote for the many hours she dedicated to creating, editing and finalising the prospectus, as well as to all staff who contributed their ideas and input. We would be grateful if you could share the prospectus with friends, family and anyone you know who may be looking for a nurturing, academic and values-driven school for their child. We would also love to hear your thoughts and feedback. Please click the link below to read our new prospectus and discover what makes our school so special.

[Merry Hill School Prospectus](#)

### A Happy Face

The Merry Hill Way remains at the heart of our school community, and it has been wonderful to see children consistently demonstrating our expectations across the school.

#### **Team Points Focus:**

- **EYFS:** We line up sensibly and keep our place in the line.
- **KS1:** We are courteous to one another and take care of school property.

Children have been recognised for showing respect, responsibility and kindness, and staff have been proud to celebrate these positive behaviours.

*A Happy Face, A Learning Place, A Growing Space*

## Developing Our School Through Learning

At Merry Hill, we are committed to continually developing our practice so that we can provide the very best education for our children. All staff across the school are actively engaged in professional learning, including training, professional reading, collaboration and reflection on practice. This shared commitment ensures that we continue to strengthen teaching, learning and care for every child.

As part of this wider approach, senior leaders also engage in nationally recognised professional development. I have recently completed my Executive Leadership (NPQEL), and Mrs Ineson has completed her Senior Leadership (NPQSL). These programmes support us in strengthening leadership at all levels, reflecting on our practice and ensuring that our decisions are firmly rooted in evidence.

We are also pleased to share that three Learning Support Assistants are currently undertaking their Level 3 qualification, with one LSA specialising in SEND. In addition to this, two LSAs are working closely with an inclusion specialist from the speech, language, communication and autism team to upskill and implement targeted interventions. We have also two LSA's in Early Years taking part in language development training with an NHS Speech Therapy service. We continually look for ways to develop pupil's communication and language throughout our early years' curriculum and environment.

In the coming week, one of our LSA's will be taking part in cognition and learning training and disseminating this with our LSA team so we can recognise pupil challenges and embed successful strategies to support all children to make good progress.

We are fortunate to have such a dedicated and reflective team who are committed to learning together and continually improving our school.

## Governors' Meeting

On Thursday, a Full Governing Body meeting was held. It was a very productive session, with governors working closely with school leaders to support and challenge the ongoing development of Merry Hill. Discussions included ways to enhance functional movement in PE sessions, ensuring that children remain active while developing skills that support their overall physical wellbeing. Governors also reviewed the progress of the school development plan, with a particular focus on the curriculum. As part of this, they received reports from Mrs Ineson and Miss Finch on a project they are carrying out with the county to improve outcomes for pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium.

The school is also delighted to welcome Matthew Dokelman back to the governing board. His expertise in finance will be a valuable asset in strengthening the school's leadership and strategic planning. The governors' time, commitment and expertise are greatly appreciated, and their dedication plays a vital role in ensuring that Merry Hill continues to provide a safe, happy and successful learning environment for all children.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Have a lovely weekend.

Ms Melissa Adams  
Headteacher

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